

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-10

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AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USNMR SHAPE

USCINCEUR

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 MBFR VIENNA 0194

FROM US REP MBFR

3.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR NEGOTIATIONS: MEISNER PRESS CONFERENCE STATEMENT

APRIL 15, 1977

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF PRESS CONFERENCE STATEMENT
MADE BY AMBASSADOR MEISNER (CZECH) AFTER FINAL (134TH)
PLENARY SESSION OF ROUND ELEVEN. TEXT OF Q'S AND A'S
FOLLOWS SEPTTEL.

REMARKS TO THE PRESS BY AMBASSADOR JIRI MEISNER, HEAD OF THE
CZECHOSLOVAK DELEGATION TO THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS ON MUTUAL
REDUCTIONS OF ARMED FORCES AND ARMAMENTS IN CENTRAL EUROPE

APRIL 15, 1977

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THE 11TH ROUND OF OUR NEGOTIATIONS ON REDUCTIONS OF ARMED
FORCES AND ARMAMENTS IN CENTRAL EUROPE HAS COME TO AN END.
UNFORTUNATELY, WE STILL CANNOT ANNOUNCE THE WORKING OUT OF
A COMMON DRAFT AGREEMENT WHICH WE MIGHT SUBMIT TO OUR
GOVERNMENTS. WHAT WE HAVE ACCOMPLISHED, IN ANOTHER ROUND OF
ASSIDUOUS WORK WHICH HAS CONTRIBUTED TO FURTHER ELUCIDATE
THE POSITIONS OF BOTH SIDES AND OF THE INDIVIDUAL STATES AND

WHICH HELPS TO CLARIFY IMPORTANT MATTERS.

IN THIS ROUND TOO THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES HAVE FOLLOWED THE AIM TO CONTRIBUTE TO A SUBSTANTIAL REDUCTION OF THE HIGH CONCENTRATION OF ARMED FORCES AND ARMAMENTS IN CENTRAL EUROPE. THIS HIGH CONCENTRATION OF ARMED FORCES AND ARMAMENTS CALLS FOR SUBSTANTIAL EQUAL PERCENTAGE REDUCTIONS ON BOTH SIDES BY EACH INDIVIDUAL STATE-DIRECT PARTICIPANT ACCORDING TO THE LEVEL OF ITS MILITARY POTENTIAL IN THE AREA OF REDUCTIONS. THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES PROCEED IN THIS RESPECT FROM THE BASIC CONCEPT ADMITTED EVEN BY NUMEROUS LEADING STATESMEN OF COUNTRIES WHOSE REPRESENTATIVES ARE SEATED WITH US AT THE NEGOTIATING TABLE, NAMELY THAT AN APPROXIMATE EQUILIBRIUM OF FORCES HAS BEEN HISTORICALLY SET UP IN CENTRAL EUROPE IN THESE LAST YEARS, AN EQUILIBRIUM WHICH SHOULD BE PRESERVED, HOWEVER AT A LOWER LEVEL OF FORCES. SUCH REDUCTIONS MUST BE CARRIED OUT ON A BASIS OF EQUALITY. PROCEEDING FROM THIS PRINCIPLE, WE CONTINUE TO THINK THAT THE MOST EQUITABLE METHOD WOULD CONSIST IN THAT ALL STATES REDUCE BY AN EQUAL PERCENTAGE THE LEVELS OF THEIR ARMED FORCES IN CENTRAL EUROPE, SO THAT BOTH GROUPINGS WOULD PERFORM APPROXIMATELY EQUAL REDUCTIONS.

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES' PROPOSAL WOULD REPRESENT REDUCTIONS BY DOZENS OF THOUSANDS OF SOLDIERS, BY TREMENDOUS AMOUNTS OF ARMAMENTS, INCLUDING TANKS, PLANES, NUCLEAR WEAPONS WITH MEANS OF THEIR DELIVERY. IT IS NOT DIFFICULT TO IMAGINE WHAT THIS UNCLASSIFIED

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WOULD MEAN FROM THE MILITARY, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC POINT OF VIEW.

THE OUTCOME OF EQUAL REDUCTIONS WOULD BE EQUILIBRIUM AGAIN, OR AS THE WEST CALLS IT, PARITY. HOWEVER, THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES CANNOT ACCEPT THE WESTERN CONCEPT OF PARITY WHICH IS TO BE ATTAINED BY THE ADOPTION OF SO-CALLED COMMON COLLECTIVE CEILINGS. THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SUCH A CONCEPT OF PARITY WOULD NOT LEAD TO A CONCRETE DETERMINATION OF EACH COUNTRY'S SHARE IN REDUCTIONS AND IN LIMITATIONS OF THEIR FORCES MANPOWER AT THE RESIDUAL LEVELS. ON THE CONTRARY, UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES, THE SO-CALLED COMMON COLLECTIVE CEILING WOULD EVEN ALLOW CERTAIN COUNTRIES TO INCREASE THEIR FORCES. THIS WOULD PRACTICALLY ANNIHILATE THE VERY SENSE OF OUR NEGOTIATIONS AND THEIR OUTCOME.

NO NEED TO BE AN EXPERT TO KNOW THAT THE MILITARY STRENGTH OF ANY COUNTRY CONSISTSS OF A COMPLEX OF ALL MILITARY COMPONENTS, THAT IS OF GROUND FORCES, OF AIR FORCES AND OF

UNITS EQUIPPED WITH NUCLEAR WEAPONS AS WELL. THIS IS WHY ALL THESE COMPONENTS SHOULD BE INCLUDED INTO REDUCTIONS. THE PERMANENT OBSTACLE IMPEDING PROGRESS IN OUR NEGOTIATIONS IS THE WESTERN REQUIREMENT TO REDUCE THE MANPOWER OF GROUND FORCES ONLY AND NOT OF AIR FORCES. THE WEST WANTS ALSO TO EXCLUDE FROM REDUCTIONS ITS COMBAT EQUIPMENT AND ARMAMENTS. HOWEVER, AS FAR AS THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES ARE CONCERNED, THE WEST DEMANDS THAT THE SOVIET UNION WITHDRAW ALREADY IN STAGE I FROM THE AREA OF REDUCTIONS A COMPLETE TANY ARMY, WITH ALL ITS INTRICATE EQUIPMENT. ON ITS OWN BEHALF, THE WEST OFFERS BUT THE REDUCTION OF INDIVIDUALLY SELECTED SOLDERIS, WHICH WOULD HAVE NO EFFECT ON THE COMBAT CAPABILITY OF WESTERN ARMED FORCES IN CENTRAL EUROPE.

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FROM US REP MBFR

AT THE 11TH ROUND TOO, THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES HAVE POINTED OUT AS THE MOST SUITABLE BASIS FOR THE REACHING OF PROGRESS IN OUR NEGOTIATIONS, THEIR PROPOSAL OF 19 FEBRUARY 1976, A COMPROMISE PROPOSAL IN WHICH THEY HAVE ACCEPTED A TWO-STAGE PROCESS OF REDUCTIONS, THE WORKING OUT OF TWO SEPARATE AGREEMENTS AND THE DIFFERENTIATION OF THE COMMITMENTS TO BE UNDERTAKEN BY THE INDIVIDUAL STATES.

NEVERTHELESS, THE WEST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AND CANADA REFUSE TO ACCEPT THE FULLY JUSTIFIED REQUIREMENT OF THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES ASKING THAT THE WESTERN COUNTRIES UNDERTAKE - AT A MOMENT WHEN THE SOVIET UNION ENTERS CONCRETE REDUCTION COMMITMENTS - AT LEAST GENERAL OBLIGATIONS TO REDUCE THEIR FORCES IN STAGE II.

THE UNWILLINGNESS OF THE WEST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AND OF CANADA TO EXPRESS IN ANY MANNER THEIR LATER PARTICIPATION
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IN THE PROCESS OF REDUCTIONS AS LONG AS THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES WILL NOT HAVE ACCEPTED THE ENTIRE WESTERN SCHEME OF REDUCTIONS, IS ONE OF THE MAJOR OBSTACLES IN OUR NEGOTIATIONS. THIS IS SERIOUS, THE MORE SO SINCE THEIR ARMED FORCES REPRESENT THE TWO THIRDS OF THE TOTAL WESTERN FORCES IN THE AREA OF REDUCTIONS.

IN DECEMBER 1974, THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES HAVE PROPOSED THE ADOPTION OF A COMMON DECLARATION THAT NONE OF THE PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES WOULD INCREASE THEIR ARMED FORCES IN THE DETERMINED AREA OF CENTRAL EUROPE FOR THE DURATION OF THE NEGOTIATIONS. THIS DECLARATION WOULD IN NO WAY PREDETERMINE THE POSITION OF BOTH SIDES AT THE NEGOTIATIONS. HOWEVER, THE NATO COUNTRIES SO FAR HAVE NOT ACCEPTED THIS PROPOSAL OF THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES, CLAIMING THAT IT WOULD CONTRACTUALIZE THE DISPARITIES IN THE ARMED FORCES NUMERICAL STRENGTH. IN VIEW OF THE SITUATION WHICH HAS ARISEN AFTER THE TABLING OF NUMERICAL DATA BY BOTH SIDES ON THE SIZE OF THEIR ARMED FORCES, THE ISSUE OF NON-INCREASING BECOMES TOPICAL AGAIN. THIS IS WHY THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES HAVE REINTRODUCED ONCE MORE THEIR NON-INCREASE OFFER, A MATTER WHICH HAS BEEN REFERRED TO IN HIS RECENT SPEECH AT THE TRADE UNION CONGRESS OF THE SOVIET UNION BY LEONID BREZHNEV. THIS IS AN IMPORTANT OFFER WHICH DESERVES TO BE FULLY WEIGHED AND CONSIDERED BY THE WESTERN SIDE.

THE 11TH ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS TOO HAS SHOWN THAT THE WESTERN REQUIREMENTS REMAIN IN SUBSTANCE FOCUSED ON THEIR CONCEPT OF DISPARITIES AND THEREFORE ON ASYMMETRICAL REDUCTIONS OF GROUND FORCES, IN FACT ON SUBSTANTIAL REDUCTIONS TO BE CARRIED OUT BY THE SOVIET UNION ALONE. THE WESTERN PROPOSAL OF 16 DECEMBER 1975 SUBMITTING A SO-CALLED "PACKAGE-DEAL" DOES NOT ALTER IN ANY WAY THIS UNILATERAL WESTERN CONCEPT. IT IS TRUE THAT THE UNITED STATES WOULD, ON THEIR BEHALF, ADD TO THE "PACKAGE" A CERTAIN QUANTITY OF NUCLEAR WARHEADS AND MEANS OF THEIR DELIVERY - BUT MAYBE THOSE
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WARHEADS WOULD BE PRECISELY THE ONES WHICH, ACCORDING TO THE WESTERN PRESS, MUST BE WITHDRAWN ANYWAY AS OBSOLETE. EVEN IF THIS NATO OFFER REPRESENTS A POSITIVE STEP FORWARD SINCE IT ACKNOWLEDGES THE NECESSITY TO INCLUDE INTO THE PROCESS OF REDUCTIONS THESE WEAPONS OF GREAT DESTRUCTION POWER AND THEIR MEANS OF DELIVERY, ITS INSUFFICIENCY REMAINS IN THAT IT DOES NOT INCLUDE THE DELIVERY MEANS OF OTHER WESTERN STATES THAN THE USA AND IS BUT A ONE-TIME OFFER, TIED AS BEFORE TO THE ADOPTION OF THE ENTIRE WESTERN UNILATERAL SCHEME, UNACCEPTABLE FOR THE SOCIALIST STATES.

HOW ELSE CAN WE VIEW SUCH A WAY OF PROCEEDING THEN AS AN EFFORT TO GAIN UNILATERAL ADVANTAGES FOR NATO, TO ALTER THE PRESENT APPROXIMATE EQUILIBRIUM IN CENTRAL EUROPE TO THE ADVANTAGE OF NATO COUNTRIES, WITH ALL THE UNFAVOURABLE CONSEQUENCES WHICH THIS WOULD CARRY, SUCH AS ENDANGERING THE PRESENT STABILITY IN CENTRAL EUROPE, INCREASE OF MISTRUST, OF SUSPICION AND SO ON.

AS IT IS KNOWN, THE WARSAW TREATY COUNTRIES AND THE NATO COUNTRIES HAVE SUBMITTED IN THE LAST YEAR DATA ON THE NUMERICAL STRENGTH OF THE ARMED FORCES OF BOTH MILITARY AND POLITICAL ALLIANCES. THESE NUMERICAL DATA CONFIRM HOW FOUNDED THE VIEWS OF THE WARSAW TREATY COUNTRIES ARE, NAMELY THAT THERE EXISTS IN CENTRAL EUROPE AN APPROXIMATE EQUALITY IN THE NUMERICAL STRENGTH OF ARMED FORCES, INCLUDING EQUALITY IN GROUND FORCES. IN THE COURSE OF THIS 11TH ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS, THE DIRECT PARTICIPANTS HAVE BEEN DEALING WITH NUMERICAL STRENGTH WITHOUT THE WEST SUCCEEDING TO PROVE THE RIGHTNESS OF THEIR ALLEGATIONS ON DISPARITIES. THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES HOPE THAT CONCRETE CONCLUSIONS WILL BE DRAWN BY THE WEST THEREFROM DURING THE NEXT ROUND AND THAT A SUBSTANTIAL STEP TOWARDS AGREEMENT WILL BE MADE.

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THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES WILL CONTINUE TO STRIVE FOR THE ATTAINMENT OF A CONCRETE AND MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE AGREEMENT AT THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS. THIS AGREEMENT WOULD NO DOUBT REPRESENT AN IMPORTANT MILESTONE IN EUROPEAN HISTORY, ENGRAVING IN ITS ANNALS THE NAME OF A CONCRETE DISARMAMENT MEASURE, ENHANCING THE HOPE THAT THE THIRY YEARS WHICH HAVE ELAPSED IN EUROPE WITHOUT WARS WILL BE FOLLOWED BY ANOTHER LONG PERIOD OF PEACE.

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